

About Community

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Office of Community Development

Providing financial and technical resources to build livable and sustainable communities

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Meeting the Challenges

By Busse Nutley

Director, Office of Community Development

We started this electronic newsletter one year ago. And we started 2001 expecting it to present the usual array of manageable challenges.

Then we got our first lesson in what the western grid means, as California's electricity shortages caused a spike in our own energy prices. In fact, the first bill to pass the legislative session added \$1 million to OCD's program that helps low-income households pay their energy bills.

Then came the Nisqually earthquake. Apart from the considerable anxiety many of us felt and the mess it made of our offices, the earthquake put the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation on the front lines of preserving historic buildings in many communities—and on the state capitol campus. We are still working that issue.

Then, as it became clear that the state was not going to get enough precipitation, the Governor declared a drought emergency. For our programs, much of the focus was on farming communities, for whom drought was just the latest blow on top of energy prices, job losses, and declining crop prices and tax revenues.

Boeing's announcement that it was moving its headquarters was another blow. It affected the mission of our sister agency, the Office of Trade and Economic Development, more than it did us, as it sparked concern over whether Washington could compete in the emerging global economy. It led to

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Meeting the Challenges

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formation of the high-level Competiveness Council, which released its report in December.

Then a freak late June hail and windstorm severely damaged several crops in Eastern Washington at the height of the cherry harvest. Our local contractors told us of many farmworkers idled by crop losses. When the Governor transferred emergency funds to OCD, we got the money out quickly. As the drought continued over the summer, our contractors reported that increasing numbers of people were visiting food banks and needing other emergency services. We recently got the tally of the people in nine counties helped by these emergency funds: 8,040 families, or 33,800 persons.

Now the September 11 attacks, war, anthrax, and recession dominate the news. Fortunately the rains have returned and snow is piling up in the mountains. But the recession and layoffs will no doubt increase the need for OCD's services just as we and other state agencies must cut our budgets because of declining state revenues. Our Management Team worked hard in response to the Governor's request to cut OCD's budget by 15 percent. There were no easy cuts; all will affect real people who need the assistance our partners provide through our programs. Under these conditions, we will be doing all we can to make our administration of these programs as efficient as possible.

For a time the recession also delayed implementation of the state capital budget. We scrambled to keep projects alive as deadlines for needed state funding approached. The Governor's lifting of the "pause" was a relief, especially for the Housing Division and other programs that assist construction projects through bond-backed funds.

For this issue of *About Community*, we asked program managers to highlight some of their accomplishments over the year. What follows are their summaries of highlights and challenges. They reflect themes:

Responsiveness: The extraordinary events of 2001 caused many programs to take on extra assignments.

Innovation: More and more programs are doing business via the Internet, cutting costs and time for their staffs, contractors, and customers.

Collaboration: Many program staff worked across divisional lines, and with stakeholders, to improve how we assist communities.

Outstanding Employee Awards



Employee of the Year

DORIS GILGAN

MANAGER, OFFICE SERVICES

The first winner of OCD's Employee-of-the-Year Award is Doris Gilgan.

Doris Gilgan's official title is Manager of Office Services. She says this means she "does telephones and toilets."

Doris works for all of us in the agency. For much of the day, she's on her feet, moving through the building, checking up on things that need to be fixed, in communication via her cell-phone headset.

In a normal year she handles all the odds and ends that come up that need to be fixed so people can keep doing their jobs. Last year she was at the center of the major events that affected our workplaces – remodeling, the earthquake, and security concerns after 9-11.

Employee of the Quarter

PEGGY KARR

HOUSING FINANCE UNIT

Peggy helps housing staff execute contracts on time, so that contractors, communities, and people who need housing receive the benefits of affordable housing as soon as possible. She goes to extra lengths to make certain that urgent needs receive special attention.

Peggy's skill in developing contracts and guiding them through the complex legal maze is outstanding. Those of us who work with Peggy appreciate her ability to handle stressful situations and maintain a positive attitude. Even when the line of people waiting to see her is three deep, Peggy manages to assist each of us in a friendly and professional manner.



OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Community Development Block Grant

The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) provides grants to cities and counties for housing rehabilitation, economic development, infrastructure, community facilities, planning, and public services projects. Projects must principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons. Projects funded by CDBG are diverse; all, however, solve locally identified priorities. Last year's projects included:

- A revolving, regional micro-loan fund serving Grays Harbor, Clallam, Island, Jefferson, Mason, Pacific, San Juan, Thurston, and Wahkiakum counties. The Olympic Microloan Fund makes loans to low- and moderate-income persons who want to start or expand a business but cannot get traditional financing. Last year's 37 loans leveraged another \$2,509,405, creating or retaining 236 jobs. Only two loans have defaulted.
- Grand Coulee stabilized a hillside that threatened its hospital, the only critical care facility in a 200-square mile area.
- With a Community Investment Fund grant, Raymond and Grays Harbor College converted Riverview Elementary School into the college's Pacific County Satellite Campus. Pacific County has few educational opportunities, and this project increases college access and boosts economic prosperity for many low-income households. It also restored a local landmark that the community can be proud of for many years to come.

- Garfield improved the town's water distribution system and replaced the existing reservoir with a larger one, enabling adequate fire flow and storage. The project will also reduce homeowner's fire insurance costs.
- Pateros replaced its antiquated wastewater treatment facility, whose capacity was preventing even modest growth in housing or business.
- With a \$24,000 Planning-Only Grant, Yakima County wrote an Engineering/Project Report and Environmental Report for a new water system for the unincorporated community of Parker, where all 300 residents, 87 percent of whom are low- and moderate-income, are using contaminated drinking water. Residents now acknowledge the need for a new public water system and support county and tribal efforts to obtain financing for its construction.



- **Photo above:** Pomeroy built a new wastewater treatment facility and improved its collection system. The completed system will enhance the city's prospects for future economic growth and prevent pollution of Pataha Creek, which runs through the city.

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Children's Services

Last year the Children's Services Unit focused on promoting quality, ensuring accountability, and supporting program success among providers of comprehensive early childhood and family support services. Among the year's accomplishments are:

- **Socio-Emotional Assessment.** A pilot project trained local pre-kindergarten teachers to use a socio-emotional assessment tool to plan curricula, adjust classroom environments, and identify children's mental health needs. Plans are to expand this pilot to all ECEAP and Head Start programs.
- **Child-Care Partnerships:** Groups are integrating child care with comprehensive early childhood services like ECEAP and Head Start.
- **Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Management System (EMS):** The Former ECEAP Data Transfer System has been replaced with the Internet-deployed ECEAP Management System. This system allows authorized staff to enter data required for planning and reporting directly into the state database from any Internet-capable computer. Many reports concerning contractor performance and service demographics are now available to local and state staff.
- **Desired Outcomes for ECEAP:** The ECEAP program has worked with community partners and collaborating agencies to identify desired outcomes of participation in the ECEAP program. A research partner will assist ECEAP in measuring and reporting pre-enrollment and post-enrollment outcomes. Ultimately, reported data will be integrated into the Early Childhood Management System, promoting accountability, effective management, and program planning.
- **Preventing Child Abuse.** The Take-Home Activity Kit for Families is a training and family involvement curriculum developed by Children's Services Unit for home visitors and educators in ECEAP and Head Start programs. Children's Services staff are providing training and distributing the kits and related curriculum materials. This resource has been so well received that it will be made available to other programs that work with children and families in Washington.
- **Professional Development Efforts with Community and Technical Colleges.** Three organizations and the Children's Unit have developed an institute to begin rethinking and reshaping early childhood education or parent education courses and programs to meet changing ethnic, cultural, class, and linguistic needs of students in community and technical colleges. Participating community and technical college students will learn to work with families and children in their local communities. The "Taking the Lead" Institute involved the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, the Washington Association of Educators of Personnel in Early Childhood Programs, and the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children.
- **A Looming Transportation Challenge:** Current ECEAP Performance Standards set specific transportation requirements. They include collaborating with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for programs located within school districts, and complying with state safety standards. However, new federal Head Start regulations require that by January 2006 Head Start agencies must use either a school bus or an "allowable alternate vehicle" to transport clients. Local programs using vans or other non-conforming vehicles could be faced with an enormous expense to replace their vehicles.

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Farmworker Housing

For the last several years, the Governor and Legislature have made housing for farmworkers a priority. In 2001, OCD had significant accomplishments toward addressing this need:

- In April OCD hired a bilingual Farmworker Housing Coordinator.
- The Pangborn and Monitor Park temporary housing camps were ready for the cherry harvest and housed 300 farmworkers and family members.
- New permanent housing for farmworkers opened at San Isidoro Plaza in Granger (25 units) and Continental Place in Mt. Vernon (50 units).
- The Housing Authority of Wenatchee and the County of Chelan is building OCD's first project that combines migrant and permanent farmworker housing. Heritage Glen in East Wenatchee will have 18 units for seasonal housing, 17 for permanent housing.

- Also under construction, Sterling Meadows in Bellingham will add 50 units of permanent farmworker housing; Raspberry Ridge in Burlington will add 50 units of permanent farmworker housing.
- OCD also approved loans for Mabton Family Housing in Mabton, Buena Nueva near Toppenish, Cherryhill Villas in Benton City, and the IronStraw Omak Model Farmworker Housing Project.
- The infrastructure loan program helped growers build utilities and foundations for on-farm housing with 1006 beds.

All federal Housing and Urban Development infrastructure loan funds to help growers build on-farm housing are gone. In the coming year the program needs to find state funds for on-farm housing, which is more cost effective over the long run than tent camps on public land. One way to reduce the cost of camps would be to improve ways of handling sewage.



- **Photo above:** A demonstration project in Mattawa broke ground in August and will be finished early in 2002. It will show how structures built with five innovative construction methods and materials can benefit both owner and occupants by saving maintenance and energy costs.

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Housing Trust Fund

The major event for the Housing Trust Fund last year was the cancellation of the fall funding round and the hiring of an independent consultant to review the fund. One result was a new handbook of guidance and procedures, an effort that required several months of staff work and consultation with hundreds of stakeholders. The handbook includes a revised application form and procedures for reviewing applications for a winter 2002 funding round. Nevertheless, the unit executed many contracts in record time. The contract specialist for the unit is largely responsible for this accomplishment.

In addition, the state “paused” the capital budget because of concern about whether declining state revenues would be enough to service bonds—the source of Trust Fund monies. This caused additional hardship for many contractors. As the pause continued, staff scrambled to save threatened projects, until the Governor lifted the pause in early December.

Other Accomplishments in Housing

In November the agency received \$1,894,794 from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to fund ten projects serving homeless people in rural counties. The agency also:

- Committed all available capital funding (\$5 million for the 1999-01 biennium) for homeless families with children, which will provide 82 units and 32 beds of emergency and transitional housing for families with children.
- Committed 98 percent of available capital funding (\$983,042 out of \$1,000,000 for the 1999-01 biennium) for survivors of domestic violence, which will provide 72 beds of emergency shelter.
- Committed 99 percent of available capital funding (\$4,963,693 out of \$5,000,000 for the 1999-01 biennium) for people with developmental disabilities, which will provide 172 units of permanent housing.
- Launched Phase I of a new Web-based reporting system that allows users to create their own custom reports based on geography, client characteristics, and time period. This system will reduce the time it takes to respond to data requests from researchers, advocates, and policymakers (<http://housing-information.net/report/>).
- Received an \$80,000 HUD grant to begin Phase II of a Web-based system to collect client-level data on persons served by emergency and transitional housing programs. (The cost of implementing the system, however, could be much higher.)

Community Services Facilities Program

The Community Services Facilities Program provides state grants to family and youth service providers to help build or improve facilities. One example is Mid-City Concerns, a small, nonprofit organization formed in 1967 by several of Spokane’s major downtown churches. The organization delivers meals to approximately 300 homebound seniors and invalids. Mid-City Concerns has a relatively modest annual budget, and the cost of leasing its facility was increasing annually. Its long-time goal was to own the facility. A state grant helped Mid-City Concerns purchase its facility. It can now spend more on client services, rather than on lease payments.

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

The biggest issue facing OAHP last year was resolving earthquake issues, primarily determining the nature and extent of damage to historic properties. Last year OAHP also:

- Developed a scanning program for all documents so that paper records could be placed in the archives.
- Hired an assistant state archaeologist and a new architectural historian. The State Department of General Administration (GA) funded half of the architectural historian position to function as a liaison between GA and OAHP.
- With \$125,000 from Bonneville Power Administration, OAHP hired an archaeologist to review BPA projects.
- Moved to new office space with much higher visibility.
- Sought passage of a bill to give OCD enforcement authority over permit violations. While the bill did not pass, the endeavor helped OAHP forge valuable partnerships with tribes and industry. The bill will be proposed again this session.
- Awarded seven "Preservation Works for Washington" grants for the first time in twelve years, due to additional Congressional funding in the FY 2001 budget. (OAHP's federal FY 2002 budget was cut 16 percent, which eliminated the "Preservation Works for Washington" grants for 2002.)

This year OAHP will continue to resolve earthquake issues and will work closely with GA and the Federal Emergency Management Administra-

tion on rehabilitation issues related to the Capital Campus.

Housing Improvements and Preservation

Programs in this OCD unit repair, rehabilitate, and weatherize homes to preserve them and reduce energy costs; train and certify contractors to remove lead paint and install manufactured homes; and resolve complaints between owners of manufactured homes and builders, and disputes between mobile home park landlords and homeowners. In 2001, the program and its contractors:

- Trained and certified 138 new installers of manufactured homes and recertified 391 installers.
- Weatherized 3693 homes.
- Repaired 125 owner-occupied homes.
- Assisted 55 complaints about manufactured home construction defects.
- Responded to 706 landlord-tenant calls.
- At 41 sessions, taught 896 people how to remove lead-based paint.

The program also co-hosted a national conference in Seattle of managers of weatherization programs; organized the fall 2001 weatherization and repair coordinators conference in Walla Walla; organized a successful media event with the Governor to celebrate National Weatherization Day; and streamlined the weatherization and repair contracts process using electronic transfer and receipt, thereby reducing paper and mailing costs.



Photo / Rita Robison

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

In the coming year, decreasing revenue in the fee-based program will cut staffing levels and customer service. The Governor will ask the Legislature to establish a funding source for Manufactured Home Relocation Assistance Program. A new revenue source is also needed for development and implementation of the process for enforcing certification of manufactured home installers. Finding enough funding to comply with federal rules on removal of lead-based paint will continue to be a challenge. The program also intends to develop a Web site that provides contractors and stakeholders with easy access to policies, forms, and data, as well as Web-based data-entry capability.

Public Works Trust Fund

The Public Works Trust Fund makes low-interest loans to local governments to upgrade bridges, roads, sanitary sewer systems, domestic water systems, storm sewer systems, and solid waste/recycling systems.

Last year the Public Works Board, which manages the fund, received a record level of requests for construction loans. Given the quality and importance of the requests, the Board decided, for the first time in its 16-year history, to loan its entire capital budget (\$206 million) in the first year of the biennium. The Board then plans to seek authority to use its cash balance to make loans in the second year of the biennium. Gaining access to this balance, which could be as much as \$100 million, means that the Office of Financial Management and the Governor must approve a supplemental request for capital funds in 2002, with final approval by the 2003 Legislature.

In the past year, the Board (which has a new chair and four new members, in addition to four members reappointed by the Governor) has taken a greater role in administering its programs,

managing staff and resources, and working with the Office of Financial Management and the Legislature.

In 2002, in addition to gaining access to the cash balance, the Board will be implementing House Bill 1785, the Environmental Resource Investment Strategy. The bill requires the Board to consider environmental benefits in selecting projects for financing and to require performance assessments of the projects after they are completed. Another challenge will be helping the Community Economic Revitalization Board secure long-term stable financing. Finally, the 2001 Legislature directed the Board to secure \$20 million in additional federal resources to finance projects that improve water quality and support salmon recovery

Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

Washington's one-stop permitting agency for large energy plants is gearing up for an expanding workload and trying to reduce review time so that it can review applications within the one-year statutory mandate. The Legislature took the first steps, raising the threshold for Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) jurisdiction to 350 megawatts from 250 megawatts and making the Council's chair full-time. It also trimmed the Council's membership to five permanent members. (They will also serve full-time, thanks to higher fees paid by applicants.)

To expedite its review of five pending applications, the Council is adding staff. It is also developing siting standards, a move that could increase predictability for developers and other parties by formalizing the conditions a project must meet. These procedural changes were recommended by

OCD 2001 Service Highlights



Photo / Rita Robison

Charles Earl, President of Everett Community College, in his report to the Governor, and by the 2000 Legislative Task Force on Energy Facility Siting.

In 2001 EFSEC completed preliminary site studies of four large, natural gas-fired electrical generation facilities, totaling 4,100 megawatts, enough power for approximately four million homes. Two of these projects have since advanced to the application stage. Construction has begun on two plants that EFSEC approved several years ago. They will generate 1,170 megawatts when they come on-line in 2003. The Council also continues to oversee regulation of public safety and environmental protection for the 1240-megawatt Columbia Generating Station nuclear power plant on the Hanford Reservation, a responsibility it will also have for gas-fired plants, once they come on-line.

Bond Cap Allocation Program

The Bond Cap Allocation Program benefits businesses and local governments by providing tax-exempt status to bond issues for environmental protection, student loans, housing, industrial development, and facilities providing for electricity, water, and solid waste disposal.

Among projects that have issued Bond Cap in 2001, the King County Housing Authority's Southwood Square project stands out. The Housing Authority issued \$5.2 million in bonds to acquire and rehabilitate 104-units of Section 8 subsidized housing in Kent. The project will provide critically needed affordable housing to very low-income families and individuals, allowing over 300 people at one time to live in the subsidized housing for at least the next 50 years. Without the Bond Cap and leveraged tax credits, these units would probably have been converted to market-rate housing.

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Safe and Drug-Free Communities

The Safe and Drug-Free Communities Unit administers programs that combat drug use and similar problems in communities. Over the course of the year, staff:

- Developed the agency's initial methamphetamine prevention legislation for the 2001 legislative session. This legislation was the basis for the meth prevention strategy developed by the Governor's meth prevention subcommittee and was submitted to Congress for funding.
- Submitted a proposal to the Department of Justice to enhance the Watch Your Car Program, an auto theft prevention program. OCD received an additional \$150,000 for local law enforcement agencies to implement the program.
- Filed a "Service Mark" with the Secretary of State's Office: To strengthen the identify of the Community Mobilization programs throughout the state, all programs now use the phrase "Community Mobilization, The Heart of Prevention."
- Developed a combined program activity report in cooperation with the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse in order to streamline the work of local prevention providers. This project was listed in Governing for Results.
- Succeeded in passing legislation that changed the funding formula for the Community Mobilization program to eliminate the competitive portion of the grant and create a funding formula. With the assistance of Community Mobilization Advisory Committee (CMAC), developed a statewide allocation formula for Community Mobilization reflecting criteria in the recently passed legislation.
- Working the representatives of the Undercover Narcotics Task Forces, amended the definitions

of violator levels (performance levels) and made initial recommendations regarding an equitable funding formula for all of the task forces.

- Created an Access-based data collection system for all of the task forces ensuring a data collection system as well as uniformity of data. Staff provided on site installation and follow-up technical assistance to all twenty task forces.
- As part of the criminal justice threat assessment, developed a matrix demonstrating all of the state agencies involved in criminal justice issues, their areas of responsibility, and key staff contacts.
- Created a Web-based grant application for the Municipal Criminal Justice Program. Approximately 220 of the 270 cities eligible for funding applied via the Web.
- Staff for the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse produced several position papers and research documents that the Governor and Legislature used to pass legislation and establish executive policies.

In the coming year the Unit plans to:

- Use the Web for program applications, program reports, and retrieval of timely and useful information.
- Comply with federal requirements for registering sexual predators so that the Byrne grant program will not be penalized \$1 million.
- Develop the capacity to scan Program Activity Reports for Community Mobilization. The computerized process will save money and staff time.
- Host a Tribal law enforcement conference in conjunction with Attorney General's Office, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Office of Crime Victims Advocacy

The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) contracted with Harborview Sexual Assault Center and Washington State University to conduct the first study of the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault among women in Washington. The study has provided important information; a summary was printed and distributed in December.

OCVA won competitive grants from the "Grants to Encourage Arrest and Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Programs of the Violence Against Women Act." The "Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement" grant comprises three projects:

- The Rural and Tribal Judges Project focuses on domestic violence training for personnel employed by the courts, law enforcement, domestic violence advocates, prosecutors, and defense attorneys.
- The Amigas Project educates farmworker women and teens about the nature of domestic violence and alternatives to violence.
- The Island Domestic Violence Outreach Services Project provides advocacy, legal, and emergency services to victims of domestic violence on Vashon Island.

The second discretionary grant, from "The Grants to Encourage Arrest Program," supports two projects:

- The "Enforcement of Tribal Protection Orders Project" will help Indian tribes throughout Washington develop strategies to promote victim safety and provide cross-jurisdictional training about enforcement-of-protection orders. It will also support regional forums to discuss and resolve issues about implementation of full-faith-and-credit provisions, tribal cultural barriers, and victim safety.

- Protection Orders for Victims of Sexual Assault will train and inform community sexual assault programs about using protection orders to protect sexual assault victims.

Building for the Arts

Building for the Arts awards state grants to local performing arts organizations, art museum, and cultural organizations for up to 15 percent of the capital costs of new facilities or major facility improvements. Now in its fourth biennium, the program has received over \$15 million to fund 57 projects. A good example is Music Works Northwest, a nonprofit music education center, recording studio, and music technology center serving approximately 700 students. Founded in 1966, MWN had outgrown its former facility and entered into a long-term lease in 1998 for warehouse space in Bellevue. A Building for the Arts grant was the capstone in MWN's fundraising effort, which enabled it to remodel the warehouse.

Community Voice Mail

In the spring of 2001, Community Voice Mail came to Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan, Grant, and Adams counties. A consortium of community action agencies, working with OCD staff, established a 1-800 network for families who are "phoneless" because of job loss, domestic violence, or other circumstances. More than 700 voice messaging lines are now temporarily available to people seeking employment, housing, and medical or other services in these counties. (Some of these lines were also available to people in New York. In an unusual and creative response to the terrorist attacks, the Wenatchee system operator reconfigured some of the unused capacity for people who were without phones.)

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Growth Management Unit

The Growth Management Unit helps local governments comply with the Growth Management Act (through money, analysis, and advice); reviews comprehensive plans and development regulations; and consults with other state agencies on salmon restoration, water issues, and coordination of the Growth Management Act with other state environmental laws. Here is what the Unit accomplished last year, by the numbers:

- Reviewed and commented on 192 local growth management documents.
- Disbursed \$10.5 million in growth management grants to all 39 counties and almost all of their cities (a few chose not to apply). This money leveraged more than \$13 million in local matches and other contributions.
- Held six planning workshops, attended by more than 1000 people.
- Conducted 30 Short Courses by request from local governments.
- Mailed out more than 3,000 copies of publications on growth management planning.

In the coming year, the major challenge will be doing more with less in light of the dwindling state budget.

Developmental Disabilities Endowment Program

The 1999 Legislature created the Developmental Disabilities Endowment Trust Fund. Through individual trust accounts, family and community members can contribute money to provide for the services and support that individuals with developmental disabilities will need throughout their lives.

Each person can have an individual plan, tailored to meet varying income levels and disabilities. The trust fund money may be spent with wide latitude, supporting the choices made by each family, and they are designed to supplement government benefits.

The program is managed under the policy direction of a governing board, including four individuals related to people with developmental disabilities. The Washington State Investment Board will manage the investments.

It is the only program of its kind in the nation and, starting in May 2002, will begin to set up the individual special needs trust accounts with matching money from a \$5 million state general fund appropriation.

The focus in 2001 was on laying the program's foundation. The Governing Board and staff had a very successful year, culminating in a long-range business plan. The program now has operating procedures, trust documents for special-needs trusts, and procedures for the investment and management of trust accounts. It will be issuing requests for proposals early in 2002 to solicit contractors for key outreach, enrollment, disbursement, and bookkeeping services.



Photo / Rita Robison

OCD 2001 Service Highlights

Emergency Assistance for Farmworkers

One of OCD's responsibilities is to respond quickly to unforeseen events. When a June 27 storm ripped through much of the fruit-growing region, losses exceeded 30 percent for many crops. It was the peak of the cherry harvest, and many farmworkers were thrown out of work. Working with the network of community action agencies, OCD was able quickly to send \$750,000 to local organizations for emergency services for transportation, shelter, food, energy, and other needs.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps low-income households with heating costs. With the spike in energy prices last winter, the first bill to pass the Legislature added \$1 million to the program's federal block grant funding.

The LIHEAP program also added secure, encrypted on-line data entry to its Energy Assistance Web site (www.liheapwa.org). Previously, OCD contractors had to install and maintain data entry software developed by OCD. The new Web-enabled system lets energy assistance contractors enter client data directly from their browsers and get immediate feedback on duplicate assistance, amount of benefit, client eligibility, and many other reports. Contractors can also customize their vendor information and have access to other information provided by OCD, including the on-line policies and procedures manual. No other state does this on the Web.

Budget Office

Budget staff members analyze proposed budgets, prepare allotments, compile agency budgets (operating, supplemental, and capital), assemble fiscal notes on legislative bills, train other agency staff, report to OFM and the Legislature, and provide detailed analyses to programs and directors. And they do this all twice: under the Joint Operating Agreement, they do the same for the Office of Trade and Economic Development. Last year they also shouldered some special assignments:

- Providing key staff and leadership for the agency's Technology Task Force and Safety Committee.
- Analyzing the proposed CTED split for the Legislature and OFM.
- Staffing the OCD/OTED Overhead Study (ongoing).
- Implementing and teaching agency staff to use the new, innovative Legislative Tracking System, which one Budget staff member developed.
- Writing a new coding structure for the 2001-03 Biennium, in accordance with OFM and the Legislature.
- Revising many internal systems for tracking finances and payments that cut staff time, improve service delivery, and provide better information.

Information Technology

Last year the agency established a separate Information Technology Division and hired an experienced IT director to manage it. The division applied for and received an award for the state's Technology Pool funding for the agency Windows 2000 network migration, which will take place by June 30, 2002.